

OCTOBER 2011 to JANUARY 2012

(Volume 38)





OCTOBER 2011 (Volume 38)



very volume seems to be more focused and when we look back at the early ones it seems amazing how we have changed and it is only when we look at these books and pages in context are we aware that life is going past so quickly...that kids grow up and have their own lives and friends, like us, have aged. The world is ever more frantic and the 'good old days' and 'I remember' seem to pepper our conversations more frequently. I seem to say "aaah" every time I sit down and yes, I actually feel tired sometimes. I have not resorted to lunchtime snoozes yet...but "watch this space"

Financially the world is on a knife's edge and whole economies reflect the lifestyle we have all adopted...*buy now even if you haven't got the money to pay for it.* I think that we rely on the financial market and 'invisible exports' far too much and if we returned to actually producing something we would be in a better state. Economies that do, are emerging in a much better economic position than the UK. Forget relying on finite mineral deposits and oil reserves that are short-term solutions and always produce excessive wealth that is not evenly distributed - let us go back to our roots and develop our agriculture, or industries and our flair for inventions (that inevitably seem to be exploited elsewhere). Let us take stock of where we are now and plan sensibly for the future. What legacy are we passing on to the next generation?? Nothing I am proud of. A monumental debt, an over-zealous bureaucracy and a government that does not represent people like me...that 'leak' information to see how the ground lies before acting on it. I must be listening to too many politicians on phone-ins. This is their stock in trade. Pose a rhetorical question then answer it yourself...They are all one type - very few are living in the real world and therefore I fail to see how they can represent me. They are in it for the ride and strong good politicians are noticeable by their absence.



Yes, when I read this I am aware that I have become cynical but that is the prerogative of age. If one accepts unquestioningly what one is told therein lies the road to conformity and God help me that would be a living death.

I think all our family have minds of their own and by questioning dictates, questioning attitudes and beliefs we are fit to mould our responses and become better, more enlightened individuals.

Our good friend David died last week after a 15 year period of being wheelchair-bound after his stroke. He managed courageously and one never saw the mental torment he obviously felt. It certainly made me feel very conscious of how little time we have on this earth and determined to put my house in order, clear up my mess, give my kids and wife a hug...telling them how much they mean to me and begin to throw away those piles of 'interesting' memorabilia that I have amassed - that seemed so interesting at the time but in reality when I am gone will fuel a gigantic bonfire.

Europe seems to be posturing on the brink of disaster and the thought at the back of my mind is that without a common currency/unity are we opening the gates for the possibility of future wars again. Forget what the politicians spout forth - different European countries are so entrenched in their individual ways there will never be unity.

See...I have said before - these prefaces are great therapy as grumpy old men like me don't go on protest marches or strike a tent on the steps of St Pauls.







The family are all well and it is great to see them all doing well in their own ways. Mum is still well and walks, albeit slowly, to the shops, library and round here for lunch or dinner every week. Tammy, Ben and family are all well and enjoying their great new home. DP, likewise is really happy in his floating home and he has just made it comfortable for the winter ahead. At the end of October we still had lunch in the brilliant sunshine in the garden.

Lynn, hopefully will be giving up work soon. She has worked all her adult life often in jobs that were not as exciting or interesting as they first appeared and she has stuck to them and I am very proud (and thankful) to her.

I am actively still looking for assistance to slowly relieve me of the work burden which can be pretty exhausting at times. Towards this end I am still developing ideas in food and drink and hopefully one of these will hit the jackpot. Lynn and I feel confident that our latest ventures into some original drinks which are really well received may have great potential.

Beau came on a lightening visit with DP a couple of days ago and they get on so well and he is now an even-more thoughtful and delightful grandson. He is now reading and enjoys his bed-time stories with Dad. Lynn took them ice skating at The Tower of London and he fell down repeatedly...got up with not a word and continued to enjoy himself. A great spirit.

Tam & Ben just received a letter from Larnie's school reporting on her achievements which are in the top 10% of gifted children. Well done Larnie...use your obvious abilities in a worthwhile way

All in all...life is pretty great

..December 21st 2011



October 2011. I went for a day's sailing with Ivor, meeting DP and friends at Pin Mill



The Butt and Oyster - less crowded this time of year











Ivor & DP







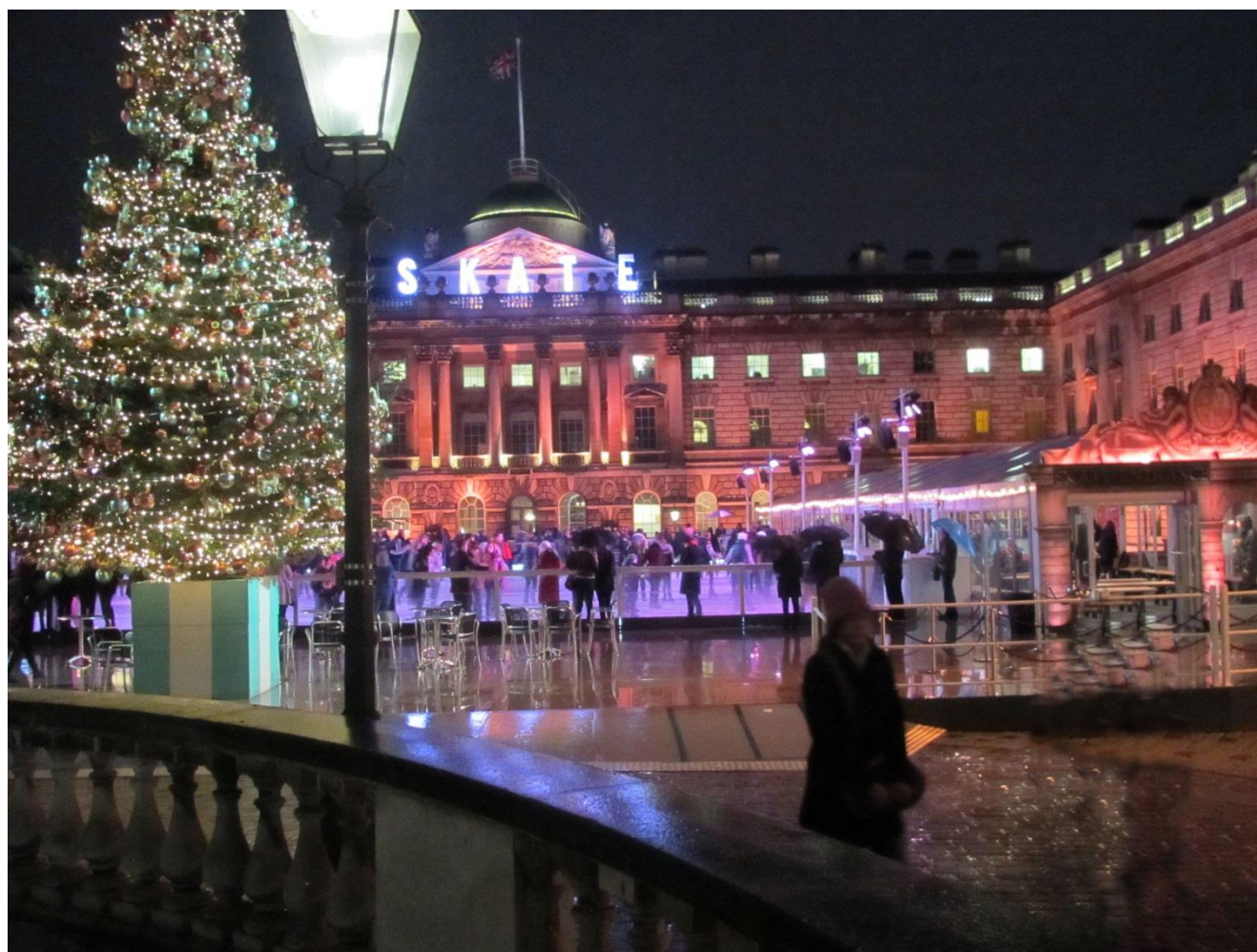




I think the next few shots capture the joy of London....







Christmas at Somerset House is so full of atmosphere.







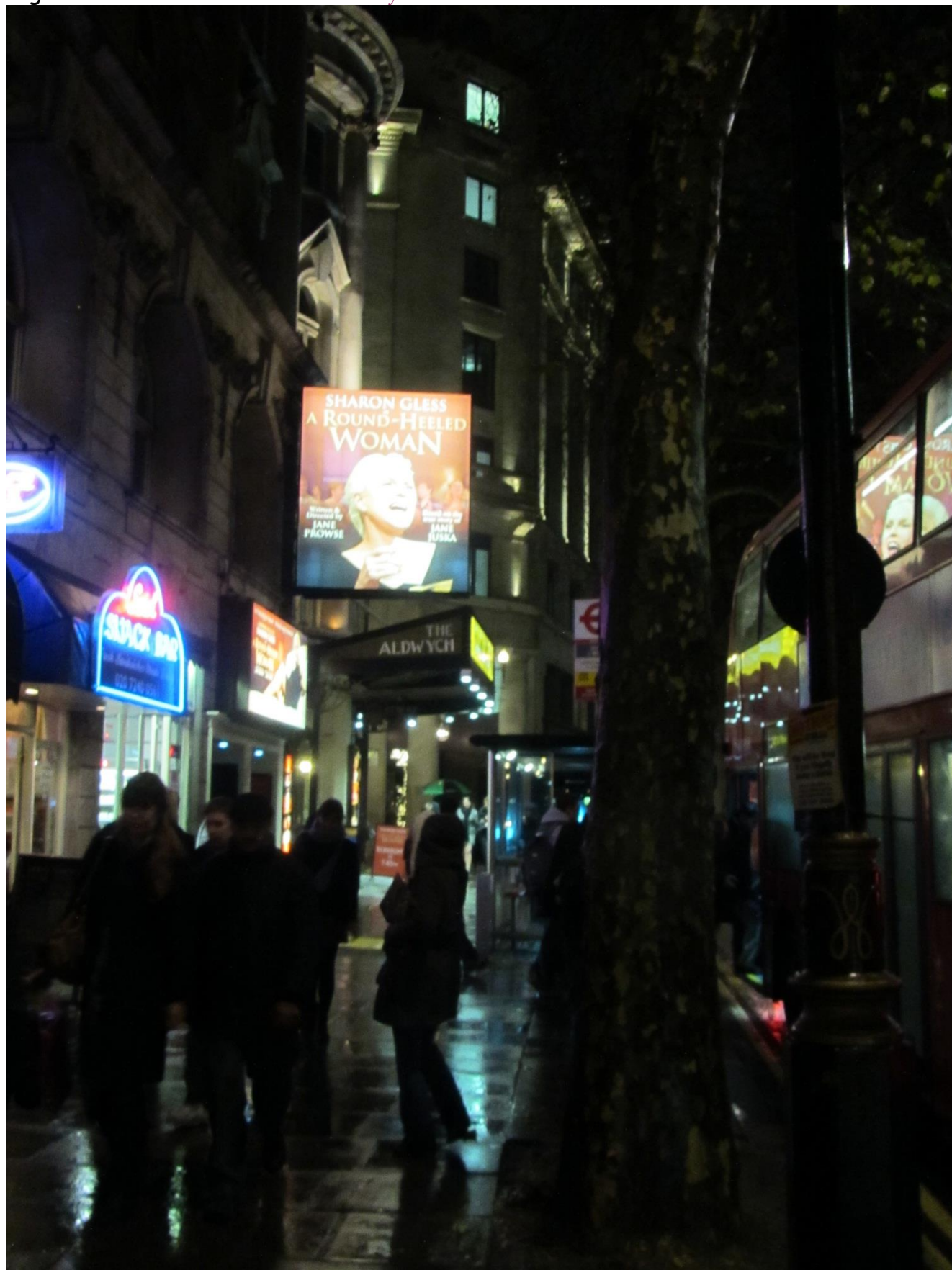










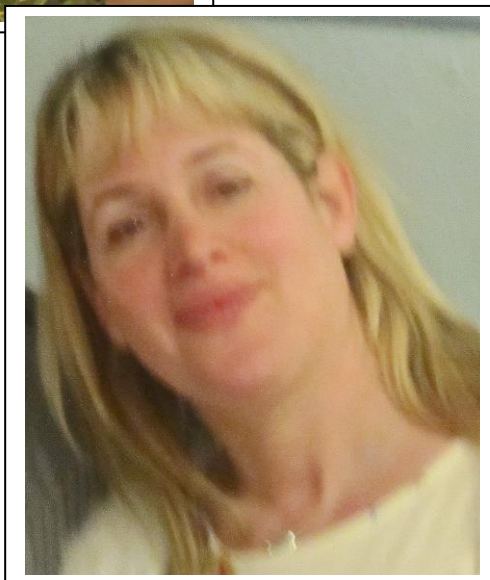
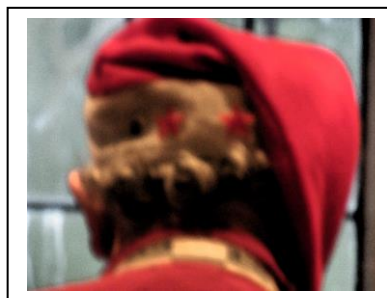
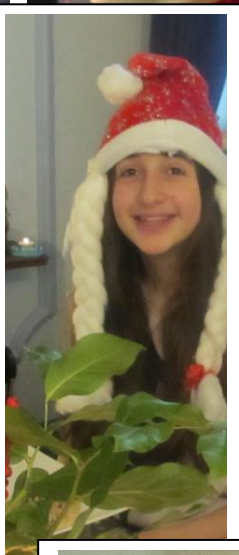




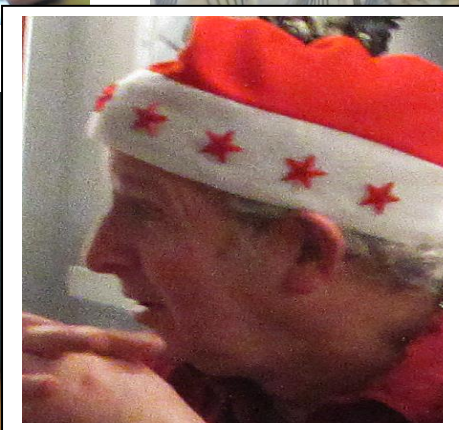
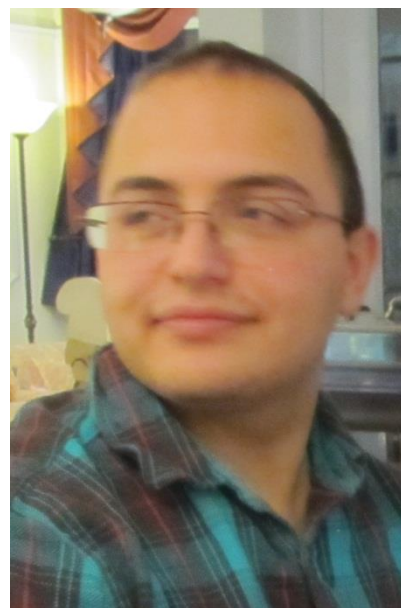
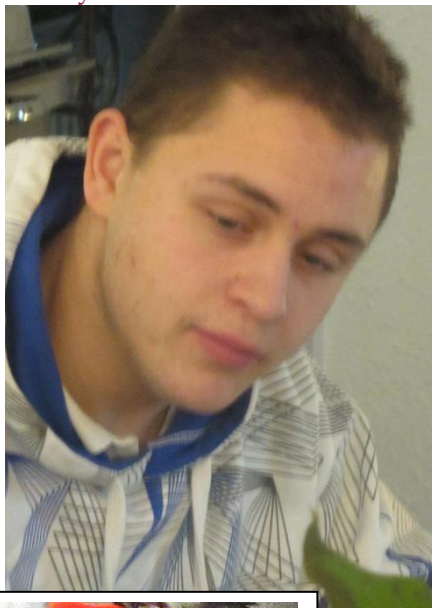




Inspired by Hopper









....and so ends a great family Xmas

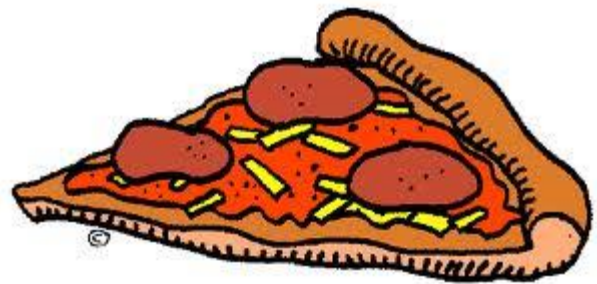




Once again Somerset House was the chosen location for our Xmas fun and unfortunately DP and the kids could not join us and we went with Tammy, Ben and Larnie. It was as beautiful as always and once we got used to it we were soon sailing round.



A combination of camera shake and shivers gave me some rotten photographs but we soon warmed up with the pizzas afterwards....





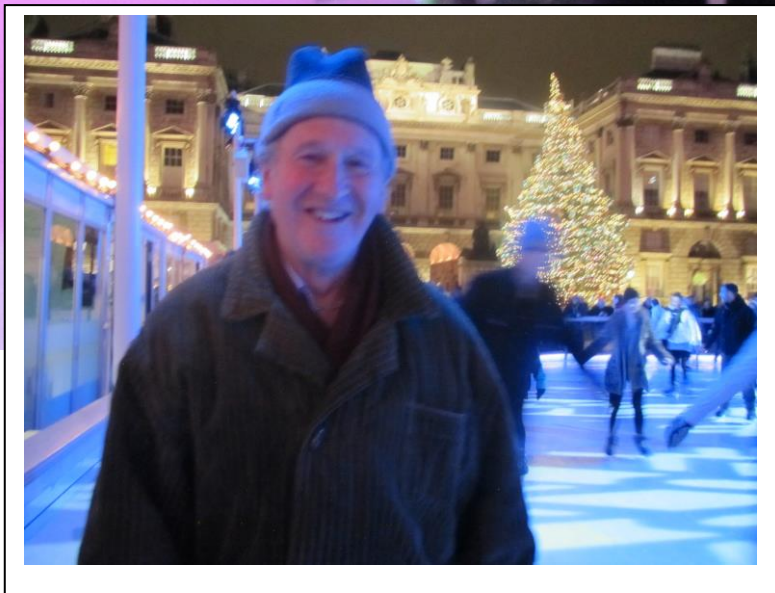
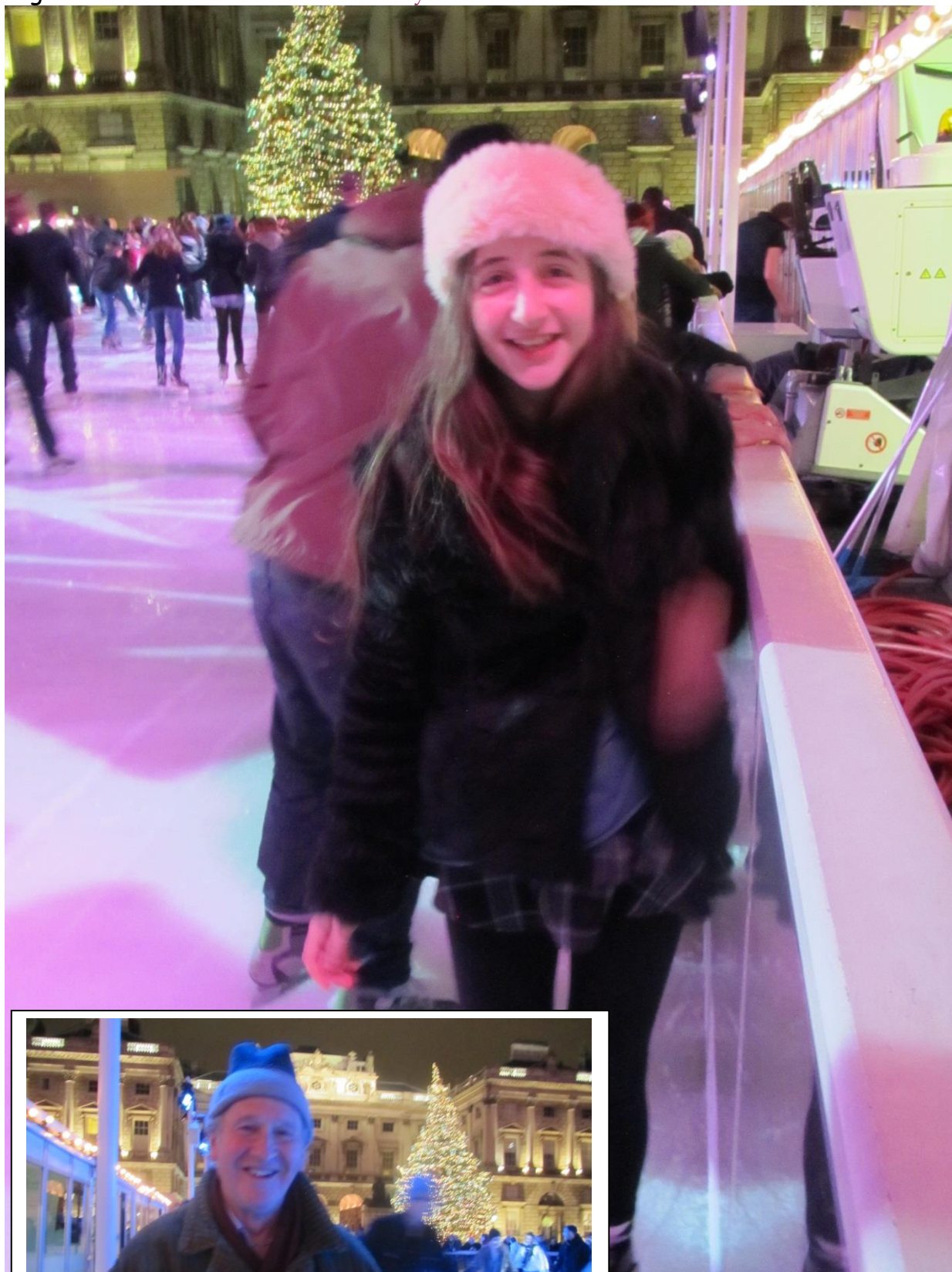
















...and the tube home..."thank heavens for that" .....did I hear????







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### Photo History



A lovely walk from Bayford to Hertford along a footpath we recently discovered reveals lots of beautiful natural jewels, that are all too easily missed



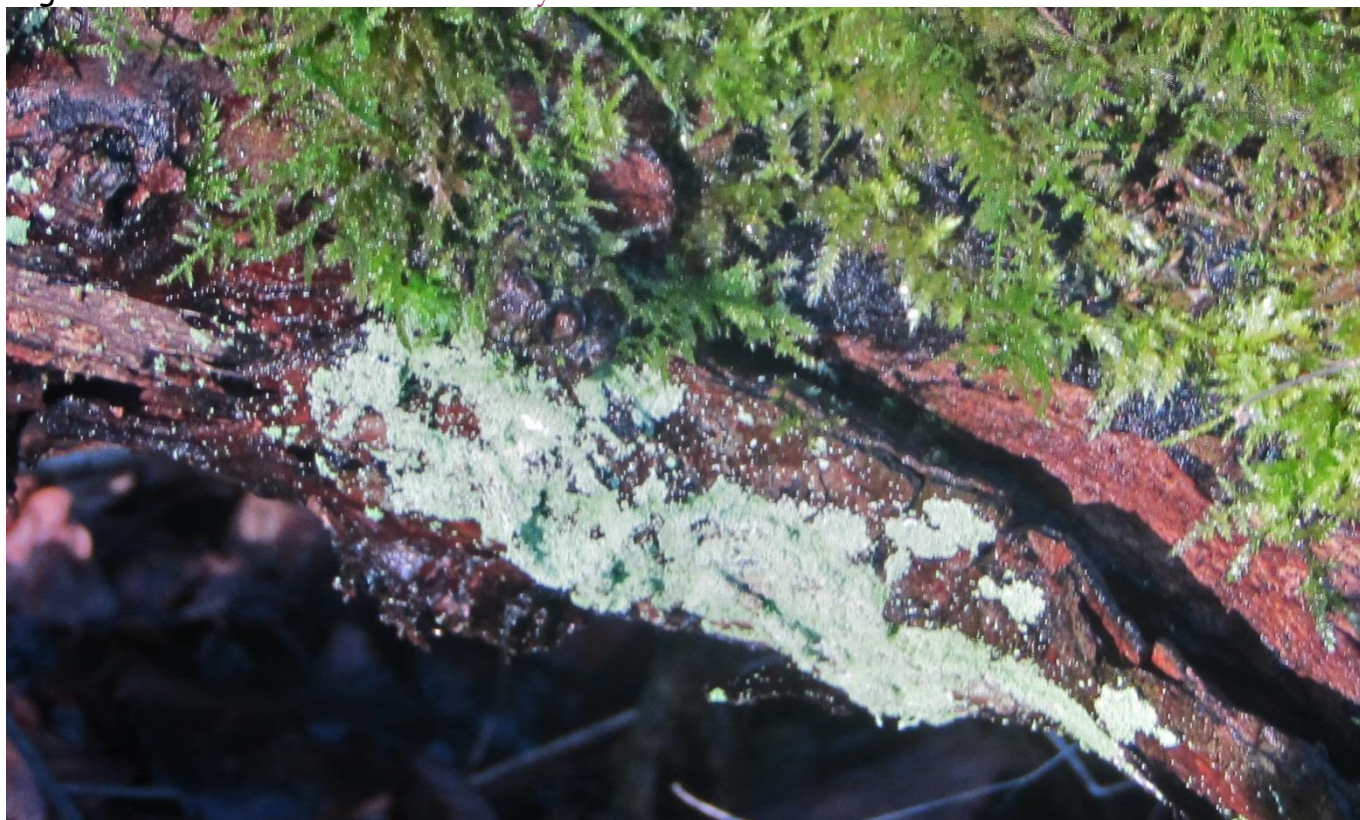


























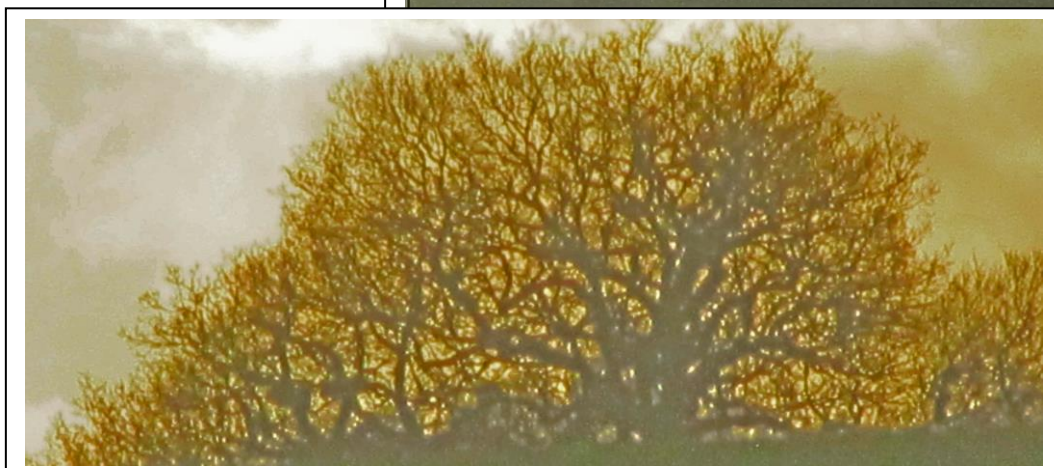
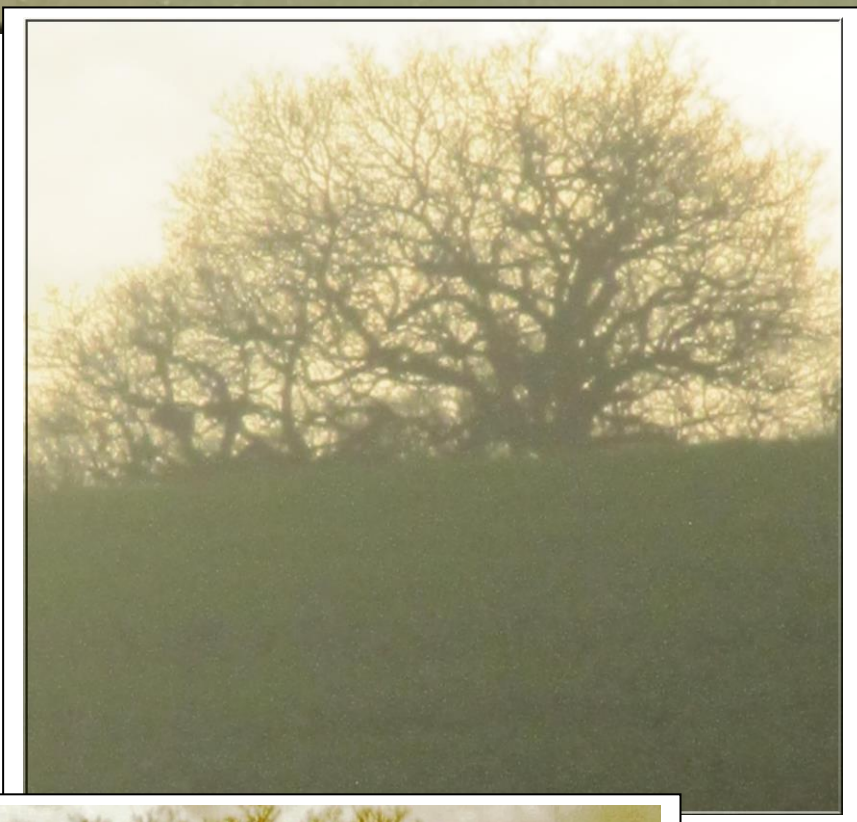






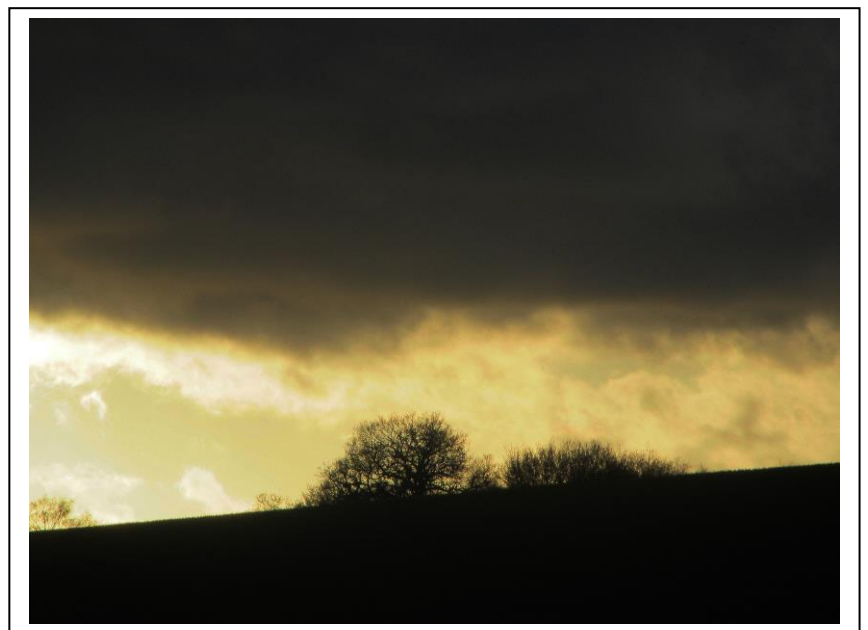














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## Photo History



I am sorry if you found them 'samey'..I love them and I guess these books are self-indulgent so humour me, or flick through them mumbling..."interesting" or something equally non-committal..."it's your loss", said he smugly

Anyway on with some more shots...

January 2012...Our motley crew on a walk from the depths of Broxbourne to here at Trent Park ending in the inevitable pub....

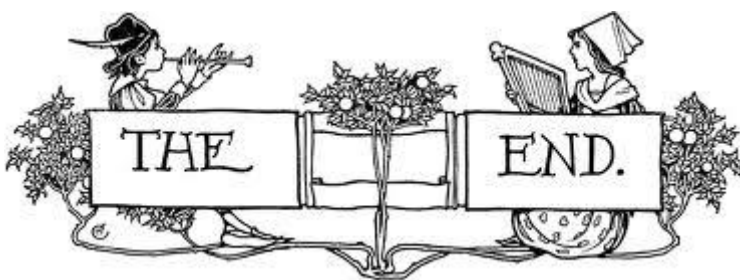






On my 68<sup>th</sup> birthday we went to a really great Turkish restaurant in Edmonton and the family were joined by Martin & Maxine and of course our Jo. It was a real informal blow out and great fun.  
A birthday to remember..





...almost.....



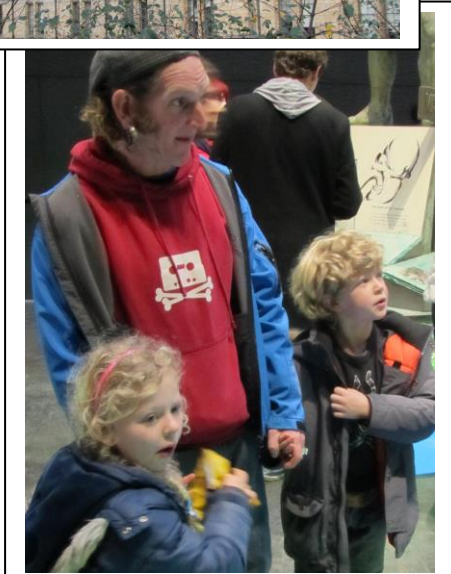


The kids came down for the weekend with DP and we went to The Natural History museum and I think it was touch and go who actually enjoyed it the most. It was such a fun day and the kids are growing up so beautifully and are really a lot of fun...



On the way to the museum









The exhibits fascinated us all







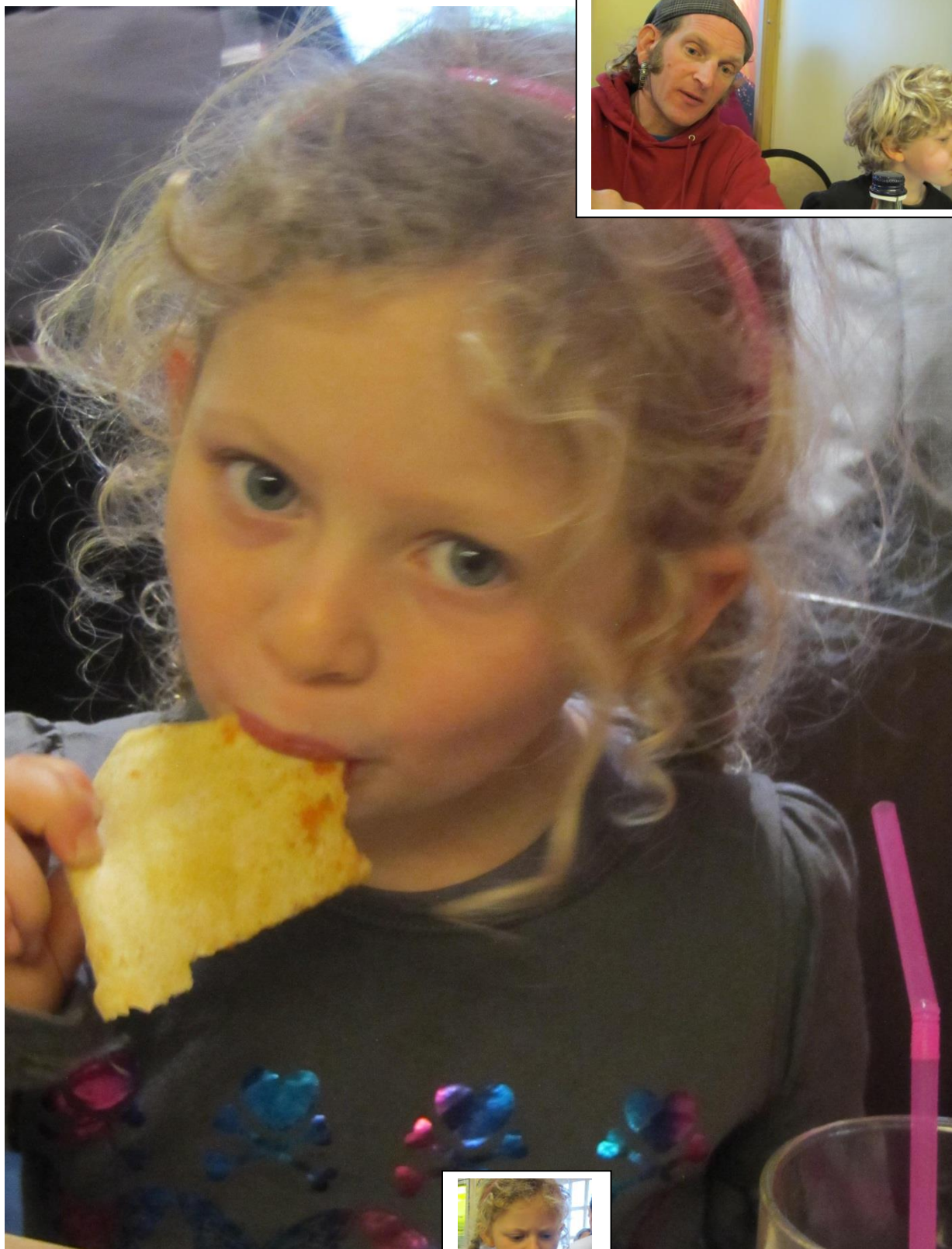








*And on to the more serious business of food....*

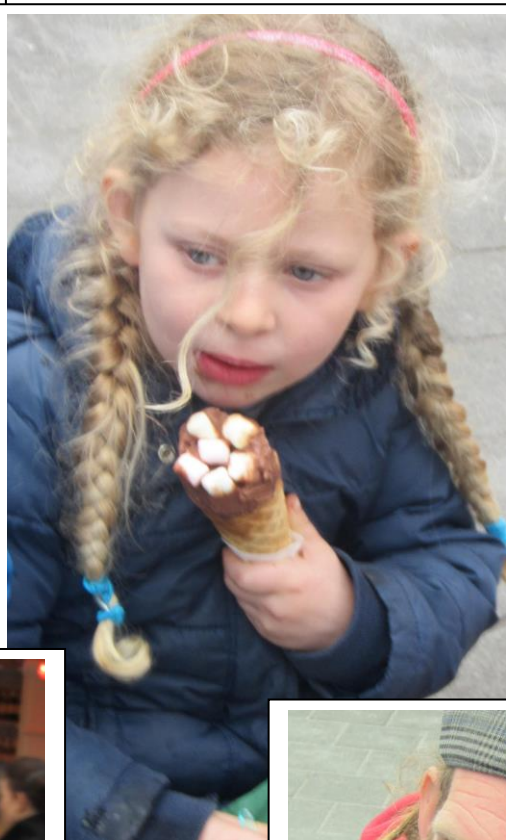


*,,,,,had enough kids???"*





Oh yes...but still room for an ice cream....



The end of a great day out....

